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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CHICAGO PLAN COMMISSION PASSAGE OF
INNOVATIVE FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE FUTURE NORTH BRANCH DEVELOPMENT**

*Commission Voted Unanimously to Adopt Plan That Will Generate
New Economic Resources to Benefit Neighborhoods Across Chicago*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the Chicago Plan Commission's unanimous approval of the North Branch Industrial Corridor Framework. The plan is expected to generate billions of dollars in private community investment, hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenues, and tens of thousands of jobs benefitting the entire City of Chicago. The plan is designed to generate significant resources to support commercial projects and economic opportunities in neighborhoods that need investment.

"This plan represents countless hours of community input and thoughtful planning designed to balance the needs of community members and local businesses while paving the way to a bright future for the north branch industrial corridor," Mayor Emanuel said. "In addition to building a new future for the north branch area, this framework will also generate revenue from this thriving area to support industrial businesses throughout Chicago. Now we move forward to the next step in the process, which will bring together the north branch stakeholders to turn this plan into concrete progress for the community."

Through a public engagement process that began in the spring of 2016 and included more than 800 participants and 18 community meetings, the North Branch Framework identifies new land use parameters, transportation improvements and open space amenities for 760 acres of land along the Chicago River between Kinzie Street and Fullerton Avenue.

With goals to maintain the North Branch as an important economic engine and vital job center; provide better access for all transportation modes; and build upon the corridor's unique natural and built environment, the Framework's 19 specific planning recommendations could eventually triple the local employment base, create more than 60 acres of public open space, and bring more than a dozen multi-modal transportation enhancements to an area that hadn't been formally reviewed for comprehensive land use improvements in nearly three decades.

As the first phase of Mayor Emanuel's Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative that will expand to the city's 25 other designated industrial corridors in coming months, the Framework's adoption by Plan Commission will serve as a guide to assess future development projects and infrastructure improvements within corridor boundaries. Specific zoning and related implementation goals involving the plan and future development projects will require additional Plan Commission and City Council approval.

"The community engagement for the Framework identified often competing needs that the plan successfully balances on behalf of the area and the entire city," Department of Planning and Development Commissioner David L. Reifman said. "The Framework takes a sustainable approach to all the input we received, from zoning to traffic to open space."

Historically the home of heavy manufacturing and related uses, the North Branch corridor currently supports approximately 15,000 jobs, including thousands of business services, technology, and business management positions that have exponentially increased since 2002. Over the same period, the corridor's manufacturing workforce simultaneously decreased by 40 percent to 1,500 jobs, resulting in several large tracts of vacant land within the corridor.

"The redevelopment plan will support job growth, infrastructure investment, economic development and new revenue," Theresa E. Mintle, President & CEO of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce said. "It's a win-win for the community, business and the City,"

"This plan will leverage a historic modernization of one part of Chicago and make it benefit the entire city," Ald. Walter Burnett said. "I look forward to seeing the new affordable housing and job opportunities that will be part of this revitalization."

"This framework is the culmination of an inclusive, transparent process fueled by the interests of impacted residents, community stakeholders and the City's planning experts," Ald. Brian Hopkins said. "I'm committed to delivering on the framework's recommendations that include existing infrastructure upgrades, additional transit options, and opportunities to add significant recreational open space, which will ultimately yield lasting benefits for the community."

The Framework's land use recommendations respond to market demands for a dynamic mix of uses, along with appropriate transportation and open space enhancements that support its viability for future businesses, workers, residents and visitors.

"When implemented, the framework could generate hundreds of millions of dollars in new public and private corridor investments that would generate tens of thousands of construction, manufacturing, retail and service sector jobs," Jorge Ramirez, President of Chicago Federation of Labor said. "These are working families that will use their hard-earned money to spend and invest in the communities in which they live."

The Framework also includes implementation strategies that will fund local and citywide improvements, as well as design guidelines that will help maintain the corridor's uniquely urban character.

Major planning principles include:

LAND USE

- Target more than 50 percent of corridor land for employment purposes
- Allow new mixed-use development at appropriate locations with provisions for affordable housing and publicly accessible open space
- Increase allowable density and height while creating high-quality publicly accessible open spaces and non-vehicular transportation improvements
- Encourage new uses at the bases of buildings along the river to encourage public activities

TRANSPORTATION

- Reconfigure roadways, viaducts, and bridge reconstruction projects to help manage traffic circulation
- Build a dozen new pedestrian/bike bridges and under-bridge connections along the river to increase the effectiveness of the area's five transit stations
- Extend the 606 multi-purpose path over the river
- Leverage technologies like "smart signals" and real-time displays to minimize peak travel times
- Study a dedicated public transit-way on existing rail corridors and other rights-of-way

OPEN SPACE

- Build 32 acres of linear park space as part of a new, seven-mile river trail, consistent with Mayor Emanuel's vision of enhancing the river as Chicago's next recreational frontier
- Incorporate at least 10 acres of new publicly accessible open spaces for sports and recreational fields
- Add a one-acre park as part of a 606 connection with the river trail
- Create 17 acres of wetland parks

IMPLEMENTATION

As adopted by Plan Commission, the Framework will be used by the City Council to consider initial zoning changes that accommodate necessary land use transitions in the North Branch area. The City Council will also consider Planned Developments (PD) and other zoning changes proposed by private developers and property owners. Initial zoning recommendations seek to:

- Change existing Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) zoning in the north portion of the corridor to Manufacturing (M), which would permit existing uses and accommodate transitions to mixed-use office, commercial and residential uses at appropriate locations.
- Maintain and refine existing Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) zoning in the central portion of the corridor, largely around Goose Island.
- Change existing Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) zoning in the southern portion of the corridor to Downtown Service (DS), which would permit existing uses and accommodate transitions to downtown-type mixed-use commercial and residential uses nearby.
- Establish an overlay district and other land use parameters that identify buffer areas, use restrictions, and density regulations to ensure new development projects enhance the corridor's overall development patterns and function.

FUNDING APPROACH

The plan recommends several new and existing funding tools to finance proposed improvements within the corridor as well as other parts of the city:

- A new Industrial Corridor System Fee would apply to projects in the North Branch and other corridors that are transitioning from PMD/manufacturing to other uses, triggered by private applications for a zoning change away from industrial zoning. Similar to the way Mayor Emanuel has successfully leveraged resources with the new Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, redevelopment within the North Branch could generate tens of millions of new revenues to support industrial improvement projects in other industrial corridors throughout the city.
- Application of the existing downtown Zoning Bonus system for the southern portion of the corridor, available through a change to Downtown (DX) mixed-use zoning, will result in tens of millions of additional dollars for the Mayor's Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, to invest in commercial development on the city's South and West Sides.
- A new Zoning Bonus system in the northern portion of the corridor would enable new projects to seek increased density through a voluntary payment. The payment would primarily support local improvements within the North Branch area, as well as contribute to vital projects in industrial corridors throughout other parts of the city.
- Planned Development (PD) contributions that would provide or contribute to publicly accessible open space, river walks, traffic signals, roads, and other infrastructure costs.
- Other city, state and federal sources.

A complete copy of the plan and more information about Mayor Emanuel's Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative are available at the DPD web site at www.cityofchicago.org/dpd.

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